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HISTORY OF THE TREATMENT OF THE PHYSICALLY DISABLED



THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE
ON EMPLOYMENT
OF THE
PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED
WASHINGTON, D. C.

HISTORY OF THE TR

1. EXTERMINATION



ANCIENT WORLD

Spartans and many other people of the ancient world killed their physically imperfect citizens. This was done because of superstition and the pressing necessity of group survival. The physically disabled person was a risk to the safety and economic well being of the group.

2. RIDICULE

MIDDLE AGES

Although the physically disabled were allowed to live during the Middle Ages, they were objects of ridicule and jesting. The court jesters of medieval society were often the deformed and the mentally weak.



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3. ASYLUM



RENAISSANCE

Awareness of the public problem that the physically disabled presented was recognized to the extent of public provision of relief and public and private maintenance of asylums. A physical deformity was often confused with mental illness.

4. PHYSICAL AND CUSTODIAL CARE

18th CENTURY

Earliest organized social interest in the welfare of the disabled came in the 18th Century in the form of physical and custodial care. The first institution to devote its entire resources to the physical care of the disabled was established in Orbe, Switzerland, in 1780.



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Physically Disabled Citizen

5. EDUCATION



19th CENTURY

Not until the 19th Century was any effort made to educate the physically handicapped. The first home to offer both care and educational facilities for the disabled was opened in Munich in 1820. After this start, public and private schools for handicapped children sprang up in Europe and the United States.

6. TOTAL REHABILITATION

20th CENTURY

The realization that care and education were not enough, that society must prepare the disabled to become self-supporting, resulted in establishment of the State-Federal Vocational Rehabilitation program in 1920. Since then, thousands of disabled persons have become useful, productive citizens of their communities.

The latest step in the treatment of the disabled has been the establishment of Rehabilitation Centers for the severely disabled.



HISTORY IN THE MAKING

Governors' Committees on Employment of the Physically Handicapped, community and city committees, State employment and vocational rehabilitation agencies, all are making history, day by day, in the unceasing fight to awaken American employers to the desirability of **HIRING THE HANDICAPPED!**

The President's Committee has published this folder to show how far we have come since the middle ages in changing archaic and sometimes brutal treatment of the handicapped into a modern program based on humanitarianism and sound business practice.

It is our hope that the history of the future will include many new pages of fine achievement.

ABILITY COUNTS! NOT DISABILITY!



Prayer for the Handicapped

God of Mercy and Compassion, make us understand that *every* man whom misfortune has touched is our neighbor. Help us by Thy grace to see that by ministering unto them, we really are serving Thee. In a materialistic age when men are infatuated by the cult of the body, restore in us a right mind which acknowledges in human personality absolute spiritual values far transcending mere physical integrity. Bless our efforts to persuade America to accord justice and equity to those souls among us who have been signed with the seal of Calvary. As they courageously serve Thee, may we honor and assist them: All of us together working in redemptive charity toward the glorious Advent of Thy Eternal Kingdom, wherein, as Isaiah has said, "The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as the hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall be free and the redeemed of the Lord shall return and shall come into Sion with praise, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads." Amen. (Isaiah 35: 5, 6, 10.)